

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 have been examined. Claims 1-12 are all the claims pending in the application.

Formal matters

Applicant thanks the Examiner for accepting the drawings as filed on June 24, 2003, and for reviewing and initialing the documents in the Information Disclosure Statement submitted on June 24, 2003. Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging claim to priority and receipt of a certified copy of the priority document.

Substantive matters

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,812,971 to Terane. Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Terane in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,734,414 to Nishimura.

The present application claims priority from Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-183789, which was filed on June 25, 2002. The primary reference to Terane was filed on September 9, 2002, after the filing date of the priority filing date for the present application. Applicant herewith submits a Certified English Translation of the JP 2002-183789 priority document in order to remove Terane as a prior art reference. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the prior art rejections of claims 1-12.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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